



Health, Housing & Community Services Department
Public Health Division
(510) 981-5300

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Interim Health Officer

Health Advisory STEC O157 October 2, 2017

Please distribute to all providers in your practice

Current Situation:

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has been monitoring an increase in Shiga toxin-producing *E. coli* (STEC) O157 infections in California, primarily in the San Francisco Bay Area. Illness onset for case-patients under investigation has ranged from August 11 through September 16, 2017; additional cases may be identified by molecular subtyping. The investigation is ongoing to confirm the source of illnesses.

Background:

STEC O157 infections are typically characterized by diarrhea, which is often bloody, and accompanied by abdominal cramps, but fever is absent or mild. Young children and the elderly are at highest risk for developing complications such as hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). Antibiotic treatment is generally not recommended for STEC infections because it may increase the risk of HUS. Public health laboratories perform molecular subtyping of STEC O157 isolates to identify patients who may be linked to one another by a common source.

Actions Requested by Clinicians:

- For patients with symptoms compatible with STEC infection, collect a stool specimen and request *E. coli* testing by culture and Shiga toxin test.

Report all STEC (including STEC O157), Shiga toxin positive feces, or HUS cases immediately to Berkeley Public Health by calling 510-981-5300. After hours, or if you do not reach us at that number, the Public Health Officer can be reached at 510-981-5911 (Berkeley Police Dispatch).

Actions Requested by Clinical Laboratories:

Ensure that all Shiga-toxin positive stools and STEC O157 isolates are promptly forwarded to a public health laboratory for confirmatory testing.

Sources for Information:

- Center for Disease Control (CDC): [E.COLI](#)
- City of Berkeley Public Health Division: [Communicable Disease Control & Prevention](#)
- California Department of Public Health (CDPH): [E COLI O157](#)

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